Congresswoman Louise Slaughter and Senator Charles E. Schumer announced that both houses of Congress have passed the FY 2010 Omnibus Appropriations bill which includes $600,000 for the Buffalo Police Department. The funding would be used to replace the city's outdated manual traffic and criminal reporting system with an efficient, technology-based automated Traffic and Crime Reporting System. This will improve the overall information management, officer safety, and law enforcement performance. The funding was included as part of the FY2010 Omnibus Appropriations bill. The bill passed the House last week and the Senate over the weekend and now awaits the President's signature.

"It's important that police have the resources they need to keep Buffalo residents safe." said Rep. Slaughter. "The TraCS System gives police the ability to quickly and efficiently upload and download data, which gives them critical information while allowing them more time for patrolling the streets. This is a very worthy investment for the people of people of Buffalo."   "It is critical that we keep our communities safe by providing top-notch technology for our local police forces," Schumer said. "This funding will improve the overall performance of the police force through real-time information sharing. By cutting out inefficient paperwork, our officers will be able to devote more time to routine patrols and incident response. I will continue to make the safety of our officers and our families a top priority of mine."

This funding will be used to implement an automated traffic and criminal reporting system within the City of Buffalo's Police Department. Currently, the City's police officers manually input traffic accident, summons, and crime reports. This process is labor intensive and inefficient. It significantly reduces the time officers spend on patrol, places single-officer patrols in jeopardy, unnecessarily delays motorists from their destination, and results in outdated data information and management systems that impede the effectiveness of local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies.

Federal funds would leverage existing local and state resources for equipment needs. An automated system – through the use of mobile computer terminals that can employ high-speed wireless "air cards" – enables officers to input critical field information in an efficient, uniform, and reliable manner. For example, officers using the "TraCS System" merely scan a driver's license and vehicle registration rather than handwriting information for reporting and law enforcement cross-analysis purposes. The automated system also allows the Police Department to instantaneously access this information and track the exact location of its single-officer patrol vehicles, thereby improving officer safety and dispatch response times. The average cost for outfitting a police vehicle with TraCS System capability is approximately $3,600. While some Buffalo Police Department vehicles currently have the ability to run this

interface, 200 vehicles do not.

This project will dramatically improve overall law enforcement capabilities. Significantly reducing the time officers spend completing paperwork provides that much more time for routine patrols and incident response. This technology will empower front-line police officers in the City of Buffalo tasked with ensuring a safe and secure community and augment their ability to conduct instant checks on driver violations, vehicle history, and criminal background checks. Enabling the Police Department to access and report real-time information also complements state and federal law enforcement practices through enhanced data sharing.

The appropriation was originally included in the Senate FY2010 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill. Last week that bill was combined with 5 other appropriations bill into the FY 2010 Omnibus Appropriations bill. The omnibus bill passed the House last week and the Senate over the weekend.